

Towards guidance in assessing and communicating uncertainties

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In the daily practice of science for policy, as experienced e.g. by governmental agencies which inform policymakers on the state and outlook of the environment, there is a direct need for guidance in assessing and communicating uncertainties. This need stretches out beyond the quantitative assessment of uncertainties in model results per se, and focuses instead on the entire process of environmental assessment, involving e.g. problem framing, stakeholder participation, selection of indicators for the policy problem at hand; appraisal of knowledge base, mapping and assessment of the relevant uncertainties, and reporting of the uncertainty information.

We will discuss our experiences at the Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency (RIVM/MNP) with developing and applying such a guidance, which consists of various components (a mini-checklist, a quickscan questionnaire, a quickscan hints & action list, a detailed guidance document, and a tool catalogue with information on the qualitative and quantitative uncertainty assessment methods, cf. [1]-[4]). Potential areas for future development will be highlighted.

References

- [1] *RIVM/MNP Guidance for Uncertainty Assessment and Communication: Mini-Checklist & Quickscan Questionnaire*. A.C. Petersen, P.H.M. Janssen, J.P. van der Sluijs, J.S. Risbey, J.R. Ravetz . RIVM/MNP, 2003. ISBN 90-6960-105-1.
- [2] *RIVM/MNP Guidance for Uncertainty Assessment and Communication: Quickscan Hints & Actions List*. P.H.M. Janssen, A.C. Petersen, J.P. van der Sluijs, J.S. Risbey, J.R. Ravetz . RIVM/MNP, 2003. ISBN 90-6960-105-2.
- [3] *RIVM/MNP Guidance for Uncertainty Assessment and Communication: Detailed Guidance*. J.P. van der Sluijs et al. Utrecht University, 2003 (in preparation)
- [4] *RIVM/MNP Guidance for Uncertainty Assessment and Communication: Tool Catalogue for Uncertainty Assessment*. J.P. van der Sluijs et al. Utrecht University, 2003 (in preparation)

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